

INFORMATION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY Albania

SUBJECT Resistance Groups in Albania

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1. In the fall of 1947 a new wave of persecutions and deportations took place in southern Albania in connection with the Communist activity along the frontier. A number of zones along the frontier from Konispol to Lake Prespa were evacuated by the police and the Peoples Guard of large groups of civilians suspected of sympathies toward the Greek Government or of hostility toward the present Albanian regime.
2. Two concentration camps for political internees, one at Argirocastro and the other at Korce, were emptied during the last ten days of December 1947 and the internees transported to a temporary camp near Berat, which is further north. It was thought prudent by Albanian officials to remove these internees because of the unresolved military situation following the failure of the Greeks to take Konitsa.
3. The resumption of the Markos guerrilla fighting has resulted in an intensification of the activities of Albanian nationalist and anti-Communist groups in the interior of the country. By the fall of 1947 these groups had been reduced to small nuclei, but have now been strengthened by new elements who joined them during the last wave of persecution.
4. Of the new opposition groups, the most significant are the following in northern Albania:
 - a. The Mirdizia group of Catholic mountaineers headed by Bib Gion Markaj.
 - b. The group in the Puka zone east of Scutari led by Pusuk Bib Mirakaj.
 - c. The group of the Grande Malissia directed by Kastrato Gjelosh.
5. Other opposition groups are the following:
 - a. Orthodox Albanians led by Ferid Umcka in the Skrapar zone.
 - b. A group headed by Hamid Matjani in the Luanja area in the Shkumbi valley.

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- c. A band of Moslems directed by Xhemal Gijergj is active in the Arzen Valley on the Durazzo - Tirana road only a few air kilometers from the capital.
- d. A group of deserters and partisan defectors under Xenelezzi in the Drini Valley.
- e. Bands under Arsalan Met Hajdane and Ben Kupi in the regions of Kruje between the Mali Skandorbegut and Tirana.

6. These movements will have only local significance if they are unable to obtain arms and foodstuffs or to establish effective liaison with each other.

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